

# NATIONAL CONGRESS BULLETIN



JANUARY  
1941

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF  
PARENTS AND TEACHERS, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

PLEASE PASS ON TO

*Dear Local President:*



Our organization is interested in far-reaching objectives which appeal powerfully to every good heart: We purpose to give to every child that is born a chance to live, a chance to make the most of his life, and a chance to give to society the benefit of his energies rightly directed.

We believe that no nation can afford to be without the organized help of its parenthood in the protection of its children. But that is not enough. Because child welfare is of universal concern, because the America of tomorrow will be what we of today make it through the ideals we give children, we offer the opportunity of membership in the parent-teacher association to all who are interested in the problems of children and youth.

As I sit at my table writing this message to you, only a half mile away boys are mobilizing for training in defense of our country. We have had it in our power to help build their characters and shape their destinies. What part have we played in helping these young men during their formative years? What part can we play now?

May parent-teacher units recognize the challenge that these boys are giving us. May we consider our part in defense. May we more than ever be alert to the needs of our various communities so that through our cooperation in all the neighborhoods to which these boys will return, we may make for a better society.

*Marie J. Hering*

Regional Vice-President  
National Congress of Parents and Teachers

## NATION-WIDE P. T. A. BROADCAST

THE opening date of the "Citizens All" thirteen-week broadcast has been announced for Monday, January 6, over the NBC Red Network, at 6:00-6:15 P.M. E.S.T. Mrs. William Kletzer, National Congress president, will introduce the speakers for the first forum, which under the general topic "Youth in a Confused World," will give an overview of the problems which motivate the succeeding twelve broadcasts.

Local parent-teacher groups will welcome this return to the air of their own nationally sponsored program, which in different forms, sometimes drama, sometimes lectures or symposiums, has in past years interpreted their aims to the public. Already listening groups and follow-up programs are being planned. Individual members are urged to send in their comments to the broadcasting station in order that the series may be satisfactorily evaluated.

Announcements in full are now being made concerning the participants in the first six broadcasts. Speakers of recognized authority in the field of education and social welfare will

### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

- Jan. 6 — "Youth in a Confused World"
- Jan. 13 — "Is Youth Prepared for Family Life?"
- Jan. 20 — "There Are No Outsiders in Education"
- Jan. 27 — "New Frontiers for Community Life"
- Feb. 3 — "Growing in Spiritual Stature"
- Feb. 10 — "Before the 3 R's"
- Feb. 17 — "What Is the Brotherhood of Man?"
- Feb. 24 — "A 24-Hour Community"
- Mar. 3 — "Youth Needs Opportunity Now"
- Mar. 10 — "The Things Men Live For"
- Mar. 17 — "Is This a Land of Plenty?"
- Mar. 24 — "Safety: for What and from What?"
- Mar. 31 — "We, the Government"

participate in each forum along with national officers and chairmen in the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

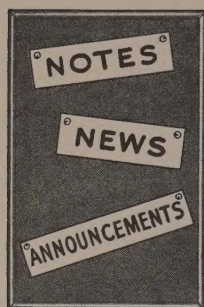
Ernest O. Melby, coordinator of the series, will act as discussion leader throughout the thirteen weeks. One of the most progressive educators in the country, Dean Melby, who occupies the position of Dean of the School of Education at Northwestern University, has had wide experience in directing group discussions.

Mrs. William A. Hastings, first vice-president of the National Congress; and Carleton Washburne, Superintendent of Schools of Winnetka, Illinois, and president of the Progressive Education Association, will be heard on the first broadcast. Dr. Washburne's outstanding work in child development has attracted teachers and educators from all parts of the world to study his methods and results.

On January 13, Mrs. M. D. Wilkinson, regional vice-president of the National Congress, will join in discussing the question "Is Youth Pre-

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# THE P. T. A. BULLETIN BOARD

## 1941 Founders Day Program . . .

### P. T. A. BROADCAST

(Continued from page 1)

pared for Family Life?" with Ralph H. Ojemann, Associate Professor of Psychology and Parent Education at the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station. The work of Dr. Ojemann at this well-known center has been directed toward the specific problems of normal family life.

On January 20, Mrs. James K. Lytle, treasurer of the National Congress, will take part in the forum "There Are No Outsiders in Education." With her will be C. O. Arndt, Assistant Professor of Education, Northwestern University, and Director of the New School, Evanston, Illinois, a joint enterprise of the School of Education of Northwestern University and the Evanston Township High School.

On January 27, Mrs. Charles D. Center, secretary of the National Congress, will join the broadcast on "New Frontiers for Community Life." With her will be Chris L. Christensen, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of Wisconsin. Dean Christensen is well known for his work in developing better community relationships, especially in rural areas.

On February 3, Joseph M. Artman, second vice-president of the National Congress, will take part in the forum "Growing in Spiritual Stature," along with Robert P. Tristram Coffin. Long a distinguished figure in the literary world, Dr. Coffin is probably best known for his poems, a collection of which, "Strange Holiness," won the 1936 Pulitzer Prize.

On February 10, John E. Anderson, chairman of the committee on Exceptional Child, National Congress of Parents and Teachers, will participate in the forum "Before the 3 R's." With him will be Olga Adams, Director of the Senior Kindergarten, University Elementary School, University of Chicago, and member of the Summer Faculty of the Department of Education. Miss Adams also is president of the Association for Childhood Education.

SINCE 1910, when Mrs. David O. Mears, pioneer parent-teacher leader, presented a plan for the celebration of the birthday of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, founded on February 17, 1897, local units and councils have set aside a suitable time in February for the observance of Founders Day.

Although this is a time for honoring the co-founders, Alice McLellan Birney and Phoebe Apperson Hearst, it is also an appropriate time for paying tribute to those who have been leaders in the state and local organizations. An evening meeting for fathers, mothers, teachers, and townspeople might well take the form of a homecoming for those in whose hands the success of the movement was placed in the past.

### EVALUATING OUR PROGRAM

BUT also we must evaluate our present program. Are we meeting present needs in the field of child welfare? is a question which we ask particularly at this time when we recall the past and plan for the future. Are we making the most of our heritage?

The observation of Founders Day calls attention to the potential strength of our movement for child welfare — to the fact that we have grown into a membership of nearly 2,380,000, united in furthering the Congress objectives in an area comprising every state in the Union, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Alaska, and Puerto Rico.

But let us not revel in numbers nor bask in reflected glory. If we are to be worthy followers of our early leaders we will use our strength to carry forward an intelligent and expanding program for today, interpreted according to the needs of our various states and local communities.

### THE FREEWILL OFFERING

With a fine spirit of sharing, the freewill offering is given for extension work. The total birthday gift last year was \$29,530.16, one half of which was retained by the respective states, and one half of which was sent to the National Office to forward the work from this center. Local associations are requested to send their gifts to the state office for apportionment.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR PROGRAM PLANNING

1. As a foundation, collect all available data.
2. The principal of the school, the president and the program committee of the local P.T.A. should confer as to the type and length of program to be presented. If it is to be a success, it must be informative and entertaining, of general appeal; and it must be short enough to permit a social hour. A combination of patriotic and parent-teacher programs might well be featured in this "month of birthdays."
3. Begin early to prepare for this celebration. A vesper service, a banquet, a tea with a birthday cake, or a regular meeting may have been decided upon. If an original pageant or skit is to be presented, select someone competent to prepare the script and direct the production. If one of the programs sent out by the National Congress of Parents and Teachers is chosen, begin at once to perfect plans for giving it. Order copies through the state office.
4. Community singing may well be a feature of the program. Refer to the list of music distributed by the national Programs and Founders Day committee. Choose music familiar to all, but of special fitness.
5. If a history of the organization is given, bring about a balance in the presentation of national, state, and local data.
6. Explain that the voluntary gift is for extension work in the state and nation. Novel and impressive methods of collecting the offering should be planned so that this will be a pleasing feature of the meeting.
7. An outstanding leader — teacher or other member — may be chosen for special recognition for his contribution to education or child welfare.
8. Emphasize the forward look as a prominent feature of the program. Its success should be measured by the enthusiasm displayed not only at the meeting but throughout the year.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Executive Committee of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers will meet in New York City, January 16-17. The agenda includes discussion of plans for the 1941 National Convention, to be held in Boston, May 19-22.

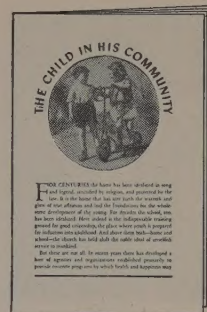


# THE CHILD IN HIS COMMUNITY

## *Housing the Family*

"Stimulate public interest, understanding, and support of housing programs for families of low and moderate income."

— FROM THE CHILD IN HIS COMMUNITY



**I**N what sort of houses do the children of America live?

In what sort of houses *should* they live?

What has been done and what can be done about it?

These are important questions in considering the needs of children in a democracy. The kind of house in which the child lives has a direct effect upon him and upon the life of his family.

The past decade has been an epoch-making period in the history of housing. Not only has notable experimentation been carried on in the field of low-income housing, but information has been gathered which gives us a much clearer picture than we have ever had before of the kind of houses our 36 million children live in.

### HOUSING TODAY

In the first place, there is a shortage of dwellings in the United States, caused by underbuilding in the depression years. Worn-out dwellings were not replaced, and expansion in homebuilding failed to keep pace with population growth. Secondly, many of the places in which families live are unsuitable, by ordinary American standards, for family life. The American Public Health Association has set forth these basic standards as follows:

Proper heat, ventilation, light, lack of excessive noise, adequate space for exercise and children's play.

Privacy for each member of the family. Space for family and com-

munity gatherings, facilities for efficient housekeeping and cleanliness of person and dwelling. Esthetic satisfaction from home and its surroundings.

Pure water, sanitary toilets, sanitary conditions in the yard and within vicinity of the home. Freedom from vermin. Refrigeration to protect milk and foods from spoiling.

Protection against accidents. Design and construction which will prevent collapse of dwelling, falls, fires, gas poisoning. Planned streets and playgrounds to protect children at play or en route to school, and to safeguard pedestrians.

As nearly as can be judged, at least several million children still live in dwellings in which no families ought to live; many other millions in badly lighted, poorly ventilated, unsanitary houses, frequently in undesirable neighborhoods. "Optimum housing" in respect to all the foregoing requirements, especially planned streets and play space, is still rare, even for the economically privileged.

Grossly inadequate housing is not confined to what we commonly think of as "city slums." Rural housing problems are just as important and urgent, although different in character. The farmer's limited resources must go first into machinery, stock, seed. Flimsy construction, lack of repair, bad sanitary conditions, characterize substandard farm dwellings. This is particularly true of tenant houses. At the bottom of the rural scale are the temporary shelters of migrants.

Furthermore, housing, as we have seen, is more than a matter of the dwelling itself. It is a matter of site, of location in reference to places of work, of accessibility to school, clinics, libraries, and recreational facilities, and of the nature and organization of the whole community. Housing therefore involves community planning on the basis of a broad understanding of the needs of families.

### A CIVIC OPPORTUNITY

In both public and private housing of the future the community must play a basic part through the development and enforcement of building, zoning, and sanitary codes. Expansion of housing programs, and new developments, especially in such areas as housing for "white-collar" families on the one hand, and lowest-income groups on the other (including families on relief, families of migrant workers), are among the great social opportunities of the new decade. In the area of low-income housing it is obvious that local, state, and Federal governments must continue to take the responsibility and leadership. *Since an enlightened public opinion is essential in housing, as in every other socially important field, citizen committees should be organized in communities to promote public interest, understanding, and support.*

Parent-teacher associations have a particularly vital stake in housing programs, since the welfare and development of the child are so intimately connected with his environment, and that environment so dependent upon a community's concern for housing.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What building, zoning, and sanitary codes are in force in your community?
2. Are there any low-income housing projects in your community? If so, what do you know about their purpose, design, and method of financing?
3. What relation is there between housing and juvenile delinquency?
4. What is the relation between housing and health?
5. What provisions can be made to safeguard farm homes from unsanitary conditions?
6. Has your group considered bringing the subject of better housing before the community by some such means as a talk by a housing official or architect, or showing of documentary or similar film on the subject?

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# PARENT-TEACHER PUBLICATIONS

*Inform • Inspire • Interpret*

OFFICIAL  
MAGAZINE  
OF THE  
NATIONAL  
CONGRESS OF  
PARENTS AND  
TEACHERS

## After Many Years

EXCELLING even the excellence of the content, there is the intangible something that sets the NATIONAL PARENT-TEACHER apart from other magazines — something that seems to give it life and purpose. Is it perhaps a reflection of the courage and devotion and indomitable zeal of the Founders and of the pioneer leaders who helped to establish our official publication? (The very first issue, published in 1906, contained a message from Alice McLellan Birney; the first editor was Mrs. Frederic Schoff, a close associate and personal friend of both Mrs. Birney and Mrs. Hearst.) Is it the inspiration of these unselfish services which has breathed into our pages a special force and conviction — which has fortified the earnest efforts of those who are now guiding the policies of our NATIONAL PARENT-TEACHER?

One thing is certain. It is the consensus inside and outside the organization that we have a Magazine of which we all can be exceedingly proud. Its exacting educational standards and its unwavering adherence to the high ideals of the organization attract to its pages noted authors, outstanding educators, and well-known specialists in parent education and child development. Today it reaches out to all who are interested in the welfare of children and youth and offers them dependable help and guidance. It crystallizes thought and stimulates action on issues and influences which affect the well-being of our children.

Is it not fitting, therefore, as we approach the month when we honor the Founders, that we pause for a moment and examine our efforts on behalf of the Magazine to which they contributed so generously in time, in energy, and in volunteer effort?

In line with this thought, and because we have such an outstanding Magazine, let us all make it our special task to extend its circulation and influence during the next two months.

## FRONTIERS: 1941

CHALLENGING FRONTIERS" is the theme of the January issue — an appropriate subject for the new year, with its lift of fresh beginnings, its stock-taking, its renewed determination to press forward and to conquer!

This issue explores some of the challenging frontiers yet to be conquered by parents and teachers — frontiers in the preservation of the democratic way of life, and in the conservation of children and youth.

A challenge to action is *Our Part in the World Crisis* — which, says Joseph K. Folsom, is first of all to strive for the promotion of real democracy in everyday living.

Challenging inquiry into the problem of weaving rural life into the fabric of an industrial society is made in *Rural Life in an Industrial Atmosphere*, by Wm. McKinley Robinson.

The problem of exploring *The Major Mysteries* is raised in many new ways by Paul A. Witty, who finds a significant answer in the power of language.

*Ships That Sail the Sea*, by Rear Admiral Emory S. Land, demands a new awareness of American shipping problems — in particular, the relation of our merchant marine to national well-being and defense.

The need for better vocational, social, and citizenship guidance, to bridge the gap between school and society, is stressed in two articles, *Guidance for Effective Citizenship*, by Marion Brown, and *Youth On Its Own*, by Helen Dawe.

Can "optimum health" become the privilege of every child? Dr. A. Graeme Mitchell discusses this question in *Challenging Frontiers in Child Health*.

"Frontiers" of still another sort are also featured in the January issue: the department P. T. A. *Frontiers*. Here, new projects and activities undertaken

by parent-teacher groups throughout the country are reported. Other regular departments — including a review of new books for children of all ages by May Lamberton Becker — round out the issue.

## HAVE YOU A COPY OF SCHOOLS FOR DEMOCRACY?

Compiled by Charl Ormond Williams with the assistance of Frank W. Hubbard. Preface by Charles A. Beard.

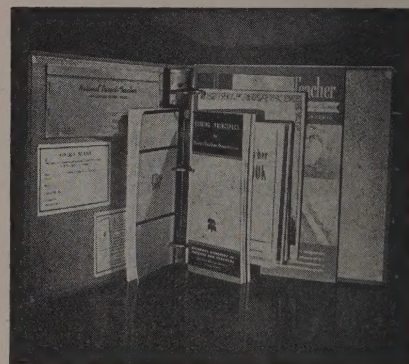
A COLLECTION of fourteen articles on various aspects of education in a democracy, contributed by eminent writers in educational and literary fields. Explains how democracy operates in the American school system and how informed public opinion can work toward an ever greater development of a democratic program of education. Study groups interested in citizenship, school education, activities for promoting democracy, and related subjects, as well as parents who wish to gain a better understanding of our public schools, will find this material invaluable. The price is 25c.

## FOR FOUNDERS DAY PROGRAMS —

*Dramatic Presentations for Founders Day*. Contains two plays, one pageant, one acrostic.

*Projects and Purposes*. Traces the progress of the parent-teacher movement from its beginnings in 1897, (down to the present).

Both are distributed through the State Congresses.



Parent-teacher publications may be conveniently filed for rapid reference in large-ringed loose-leaf notebook covers. So arranged they may be displayed to advantage in exhibits and on parent-teacher bookshelves.